

Sexuality, gender and sexual health. Findings from CSF survey

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Towards a European Strategy on Sexual Health for Young People
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The 3rd national survey on sexual behaviour in France

- The Simon survey, 1970 (n=2625): 2 years after the social movement of may 1968, emergence of a contraceptive society
- ACSF survey, 1992 (n=20055): the peak of mobilisation against AIDS
- CSF survey, 2006 (n=12364): Aids as a chronic disease, less sensitivity about preventive issues, diversification of life-histories and of sexual norms, sexuality is an issue of political debate

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Theoretical framework

- Investigating **sexuality** in a broad sense: acts, partnerships, representations
- Sexuality is in line with **social context**: living conditions, life-histories, **gender relations**
- Leading issue, the relation between **sexuality and health**: HIV and protection, contraception, abortion, dysfunctions, sexual violence, STI , chronic diseases

Hypotheses

- The diversification of sexual and union life-histories and of normative orientations transforms preventive situations
- Gender relations and imbalance of power between the sexes shape the exercise of sexuality and the risk context: partners are not equal
- The control people have over their living conditions is a major element of the control they have over their sex life

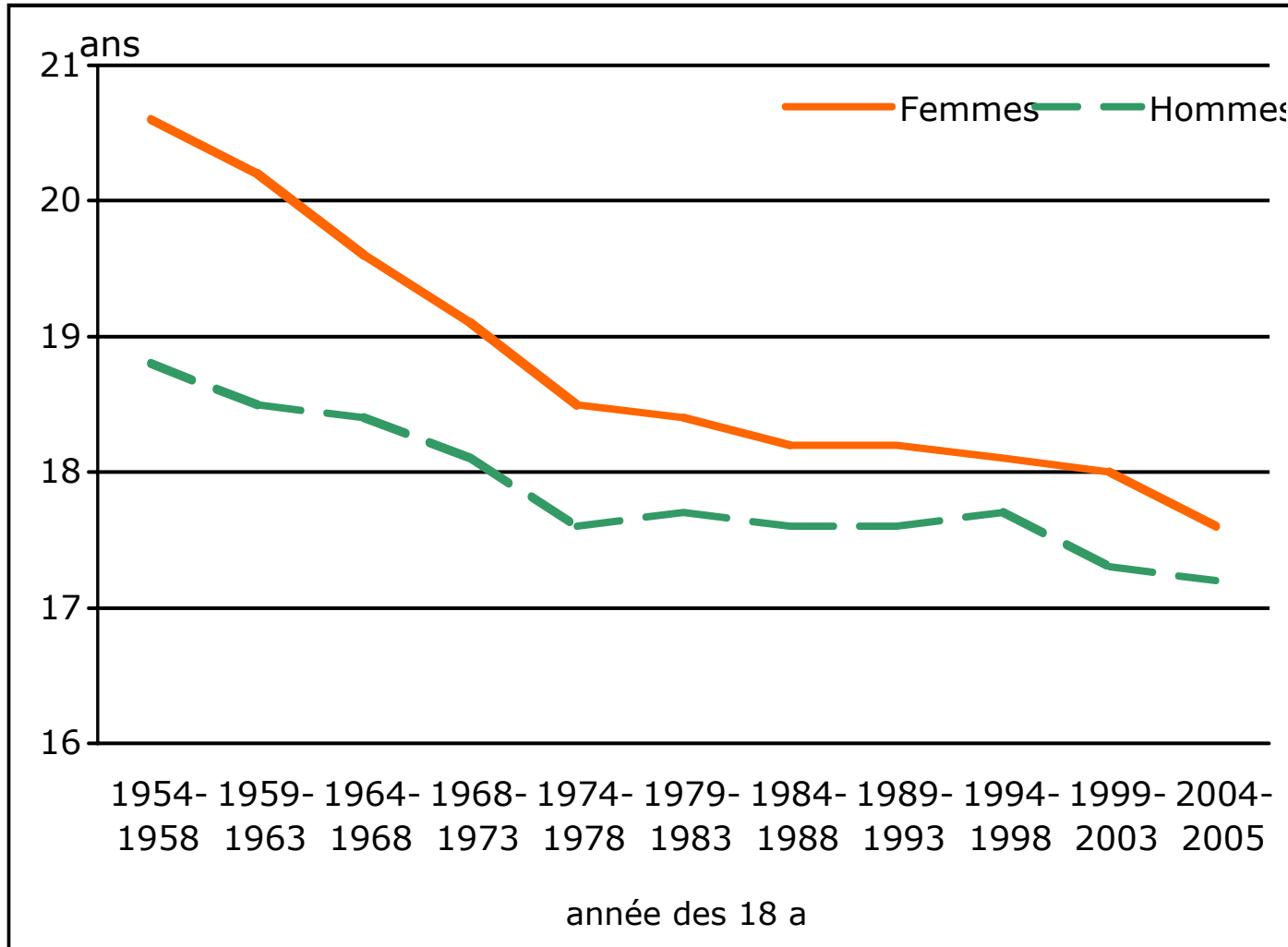
Sexuality and health, sexual health

- A dialectical relation between sexuality and health
 - State of health influences sexual behaviour
 - Sexual activity influences health and well-being
- Sexual health depends on sexual rights

Method

- A survey carried out in 2006
- Random sampling on fixed and mobile phones
- Population aged 18 to 69, over-representation of the 18-24 year old, n=12 063
- Telephonic questionnaire: 49 minutes
- Acceptance rate: 75%
- Screening of an STI: *Chlamydiae*

Age at sexual debut of women and men, by cohort (age at 18)



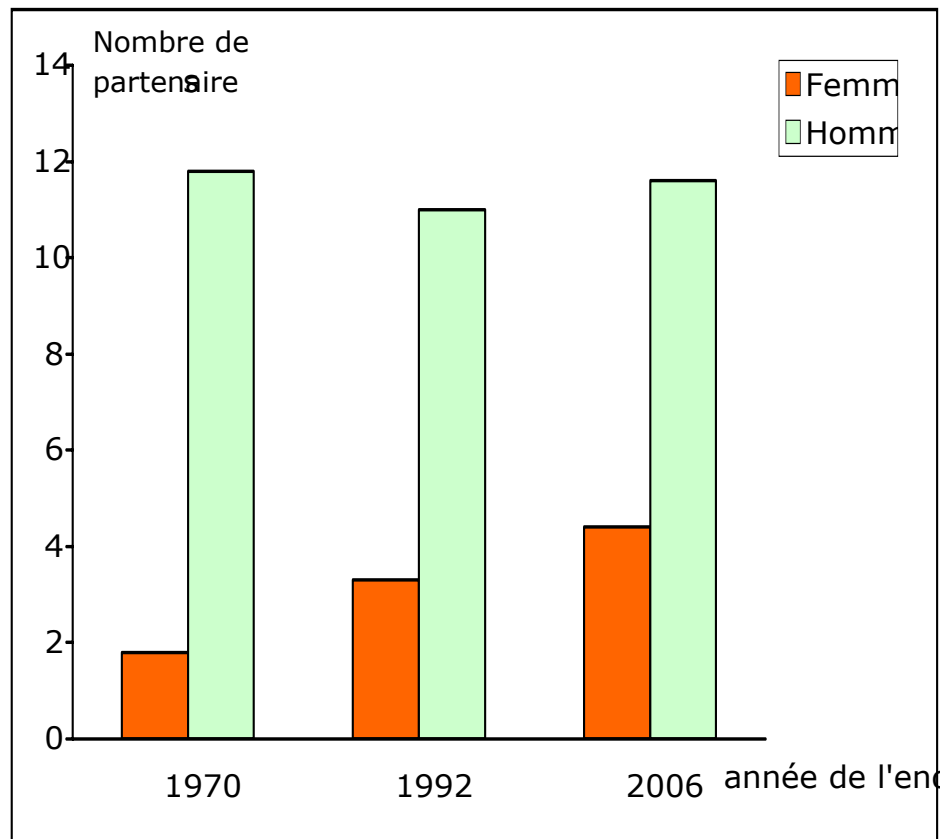
First intercourse among the 18-29 year old

Selected characteristics	Women	Men
Median age	18,0 y	17,4 y
Proportions of same age first partners (from -1 to +1 year)	44,1%	74,2%
Proportions of first partners older by 5 years and over	18,5%	3,9%
Main reason for first intercourse % col		
- <i>Love, affection</i>	43,3%	20,2%
- <i>In order to please the partner</i>	4,4%	1,3%
- <i>Desire</i>	25,6%	43,7%
- <i>Curiosity</i>	11,7%	15,2%
- <i>To pass a stage</i>	12,6%	16,3%
- <i>To do like my friends</i>	1,3%	2,3%
You would have preferred the intercourse to take place later	15,8%	7,3%
You were scared at the idea of getting pregnant (or at the idea of your partner getting pregnant) (% yes)	23,4%	15,8%
Talked about contraception before intercourse (% yes)	63,7%	48,0%

Female trajectories, male trajectories: fewer differences at young age

- Reduction of gaps in ages at debut, reduction of gaps in « preconjugal trajectory»
- But experiences remain quite distinct: initiation to conjugal partnership *vs* acquisition of personal experience
- Attitudes and normative orientations of younger generations: not so different from adults and the elderly

Women and men: numbers of partners in life (1)



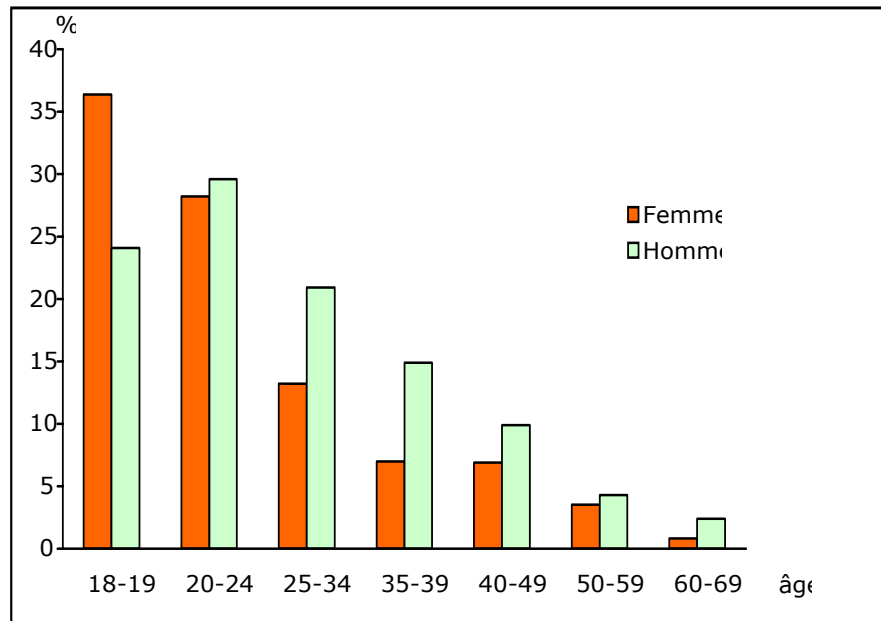
- From one survey to the other, the number increases for women (from 2 to 4,4)
- But gaps remain: 11% of women report more than 10 partners, vs 35% of men
- Not the same definition of partner

Women and men: numbers of partners in life (2)

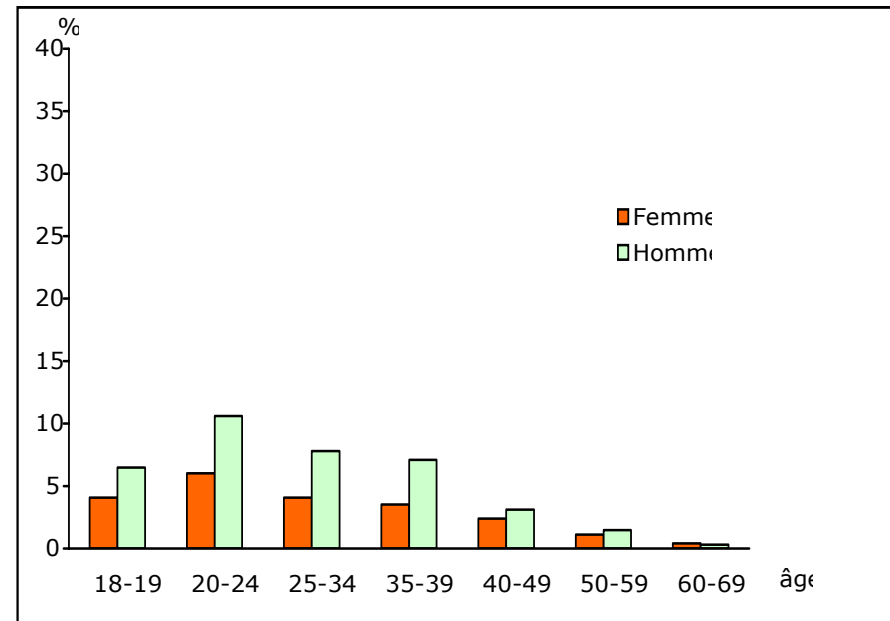
- Contrasting generations: cohorts born 1936-1955 (before contraception), cohorts 1956-1970 (between contraception and AIDS), cohorts 1971-1987 (after AIDS prevention campaigns)
- Men of the 1956-1970 cohort had more partners before 30 than the other two
- **But younger generations will have more partners after 30.** More partnerships breakdowns, smoothing of transition between young age and adulthood

A new script : dating through Internet

Ever connected to a dating website



Ever had intercourse with partner met through Internet



A diversification of sexual repertoires

- Masturbation among women: 60% reported masturbation ever *vs* 42% in 1992 and 17% in 1970
- Wide increase of oral sex, slow increase of anal sex
- Non penetrative sex
- Watching pornography: a very trivial practice (among 18-19 years old : 59% for women, 91% for men). Two styles of watching
- Personal experience *vs* Relationship-building

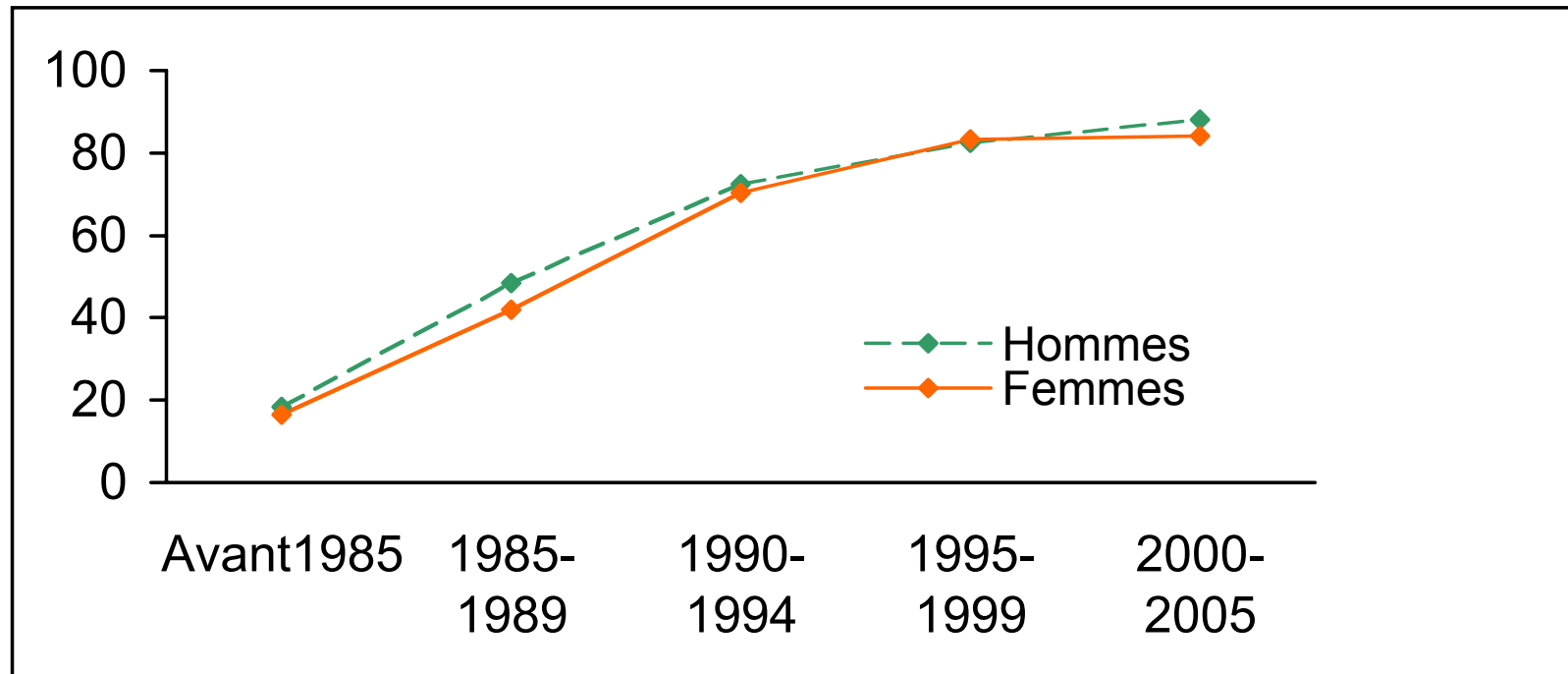
Sexual violence

(tried or tried to force to have intercourse)

- Doubling of reports for women: 8,4% in 2000, 17,3% in 2006
- The increase in reports is not an increase in facts, but a decline in silence
- Increasing reports of violence during childhood and teen age by man of the family
- Among 18-19 years old : 12.8% for women, 5.9% for men. Among 20-24 years old : 15.8% for women, 4.6% for men

Condom : a wide dissemination

Use of condom at first intercourse by year of first intercourse

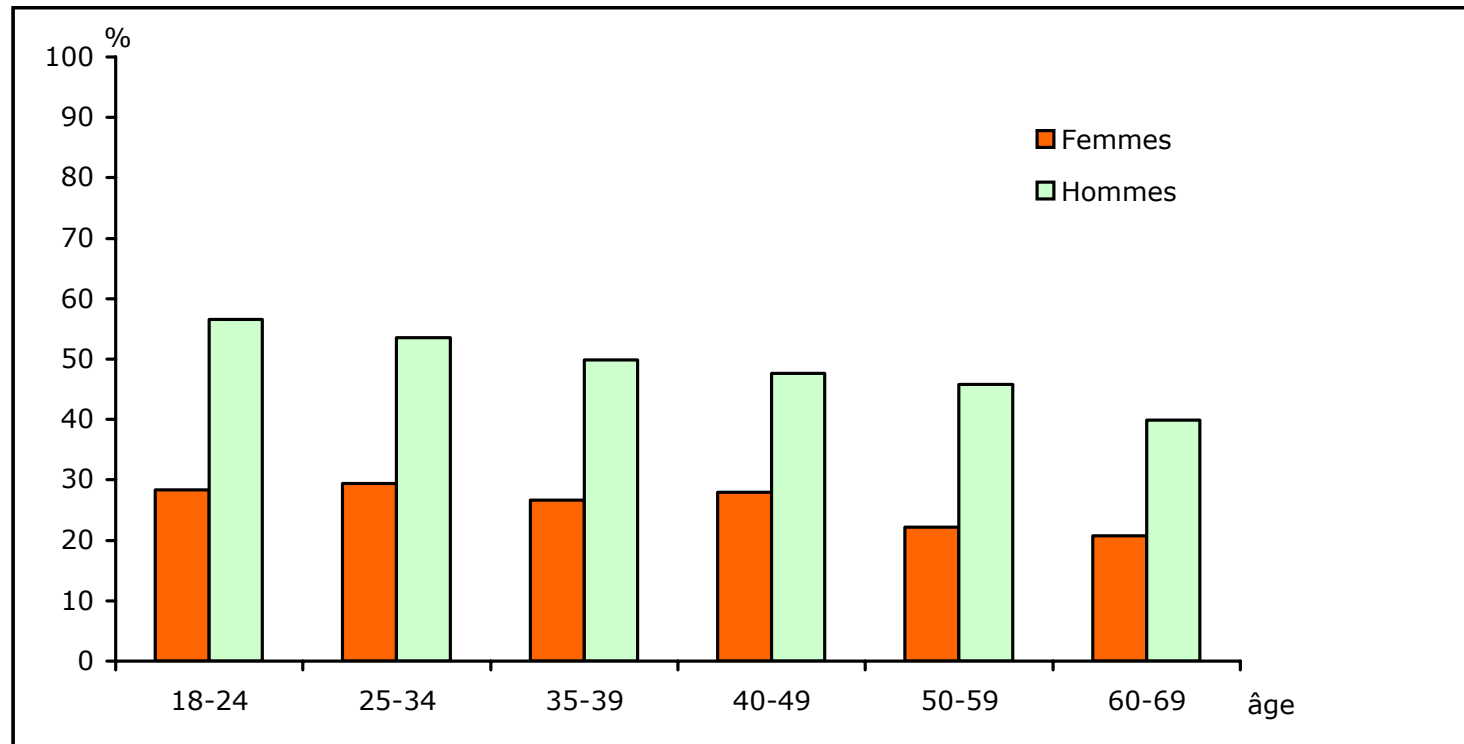


But

- Young people with no diploma use the condom less than others
- Condom seen as a preventive mean *and* as a way to deal with the relational incertitude
- They stop using condoms with no resumption of contraceptive use
- Women and people over 35 with a new partner use the condom less than others

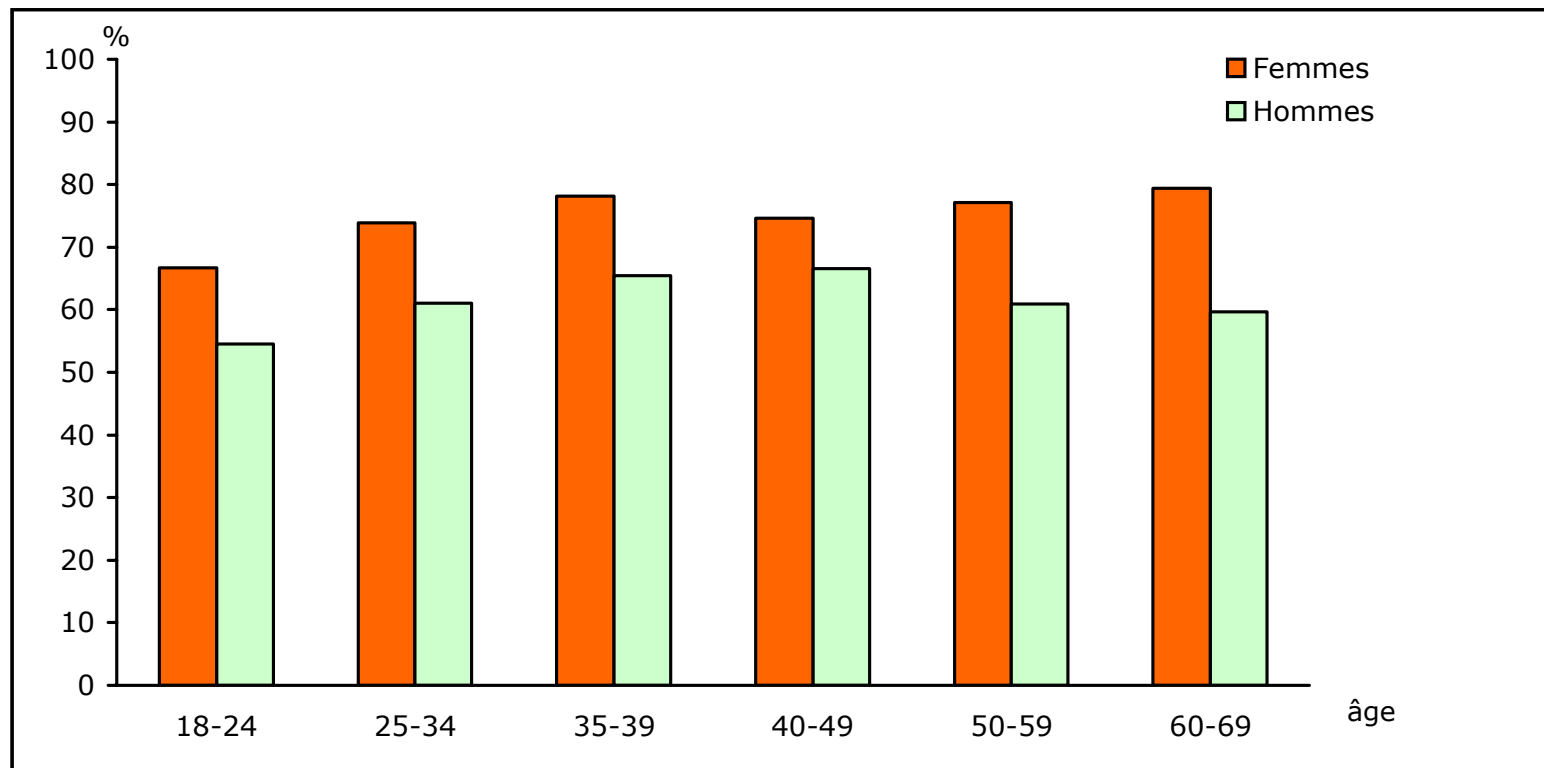
Diverging representations of sexuality for men and women (1)

« You may have sex with someone without love » (% agree)



Diverging representations of sexuality for men and women (2)

« By nature men have more sexual needs than women »
(% agree)



Representations of sexuality

- Decline of institutions (religion, family, school) as source of normative prescriptions on sexuality. Diversification of normative sources on sexuality (media, peers, medicine...), decline of gaps between generations
- But persistence of a stereotyped and hierarchical representation of gender roles in sexual interaction
- Sexuality *reflects* the persisting gender inequalities in other social spheres (public life, work, family,) and sexual representations do *legitimate* those gender inequalities

To conclude

- Persisting gender imbalance in sexual interaction even when indicators are similar (eg age at sexual debut)
- Sexual paradox : practices evolve but social representations continue to oppose female and male sexuality, even among the youngest
- For the 18-34 years olds : less partners before the age of 30, but more partners later on.
- An increase in abortion rates among those under 25 years old. The combined issue of contraception and STI's prevention

--> *Towards a broader approach of sexual health*

Sous la direction de
Nathalie Bajos et Michel Bozon
Coordination Nathalie Bajos

Enquête sur la sexualité en France

PRATIQUES, GÈNE ET SANTÉ

Préface de
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Women and men at higher ages: new trends, and large differences

- Women in union over 50: more sexually active in 2006 than in 1970 and 1992
- But after 60, 37% of women without partners (16% of men)
- Using viagra: 6% of men between 50 and 69 (3% of women)
- Loss of interest in sex among women (eg: lack of desire, even with partner)

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